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(*i*) whether any orders have been passed regarding the repair of this tank or allowing the ryots to have the repair done by themselves and if so, whether the Government will be pleased to have the order placed on the table of this House ; and

(*j*) if no orders have been passed, whether he will be pleased to call for a report and pass early orders?

A.—The Government have no information but will call for it.

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" May I ask the hon. the Law Member whether any information has since been received?
11-30 a.m. I was told that some correspondence passed when I visited the neighbourhood recently."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" I have not got any papers now on the subject, which will disclose the result of the investigation."

The Mettur Project.

* 306 Q.—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to say—

(*a*) whether final orders have been passed by the Secretary of State regarding the Mettur project ;

(*b*) whether the Government have any idea of spending any money on acquisition of lands in 1924–25 and 1925–26 and if so, how much ;

(*c*) in view of the damages caused by floods, whether the Government have any objection to arrange for the acquisition of all lands and buildings as early as possible, to pay the prices to the owners and give them some time to build new houses before handing over possession to Government ; and

(*d*) whether the Government have any idea of publishing the whole scheme about the acquisition of the lands and buildings so that people concerned may know the exact position ?

A.—(*a*) Orders are awaited.

(*b*) Rupees 1·33 lakhs have been proposed in the Budget for 1925–26.

(*c*) Acquisition cannot be effected until the sanction of the Secretary of State is received.

(*d*) Preliminary notification will be published in the *Fort St. George Gazette.*

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know why the Government cannot provide for a sum of five lakhs in view of the fact that, as we have already represented, lands have been devastated by floods ? "

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—" A sum of 4·71 lakhs is the provision in the next year's budget for this purpose. The acquisition of lands depends largely on convenience."

Rao Bahadur C. V. S. NARASIMHARAJU :—" May I have the details as to how this sum of 4·71 lakhs is going to be spent ?"

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—" I would refer to the written answer to this question."

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Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I have an idea if the Government intend to appoint a special officer ? "

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" That may be necessary as soon as orders are received from the Secretary of State. We shall probably appoint a special officer and the acquisition of lands will then take place. There will be no difficulty to get more money."

Legislative.

Members of the Legislative Council and contracts with the Government.

* 307 *Q.*—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : With reference to the answers to question No. 1295 and supplementary questions given on 3rd December 1924, will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state if the Government have taken any steps, such as addressing the Chief Engineer and the Members of the Legislative Council, to ascertain which of the Council Members have entered into any contracts with the Government and if so, the result of those steps ?

A.—No.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know the reasons why the Government consistently refuse to liberate the members from this unmerited slur? Probably many of us do not hold any contracts and I should like to know why the Government will not liberate us from this unmerited slur."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" In answer to a previous question, I said that if there was any material allegation that at least one member of the Council held a contract, there would be some foundation to start an enquiry. I cannot very well do it merely on the supposition that some may have entered into a contract. If any member informs me that at least one member holds a contract then of course, I will have no hesitation to order an enquiry."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" Do the Government recognize that there is objection to holding such contracts ? "

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" It is not a question of moral propriety or not. The question is one of fact. Apart from the question of propriety or impropriety which will depend upon the examination of each case, I cannot very well start an enquiry unless there is some foundation for doing so."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" Information is available to us that some members have entered into contracts with the Government; we do not want to give the information because it may not be correct and some of the members may be offended. The fact that the Government should consistently refuse to make an enquiry, makes it more suspicious."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—" I think I can borrow from the first sentence of the hon. Member in which he says that it will not be decent to give the names. The Government do not wish to inaugurate an enquiry which may be considered to be an insult by the Members of this House. But on the other hand, if hon. Members will take the responsibility for saying, even though they do not give out the names, that members of this House hold contracts, that is a different matter. But hon. Members have not taken that responsibility."